



Connecting people to homes, hope and opportunity. Jennifer Westerman, CEO

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Monday, October 24, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
In Person and Zoom

PRESENT:

Chair Marchelle Knapp
Commissioner Sue Lantz
Commissioner Allan Rudberg
Secretary Jennifer Westerman

ABSENT:

Vice Chair Traci Wood
Commissioner David Vasquez
Commissioner Dixie Kolditz

STAFF:

Katie Bonus, Director of Operations
Cecilia Larson, Rent Assistance Program Manager
Rachelle Sanders, VIP Manager
Jessica Galovin, Finance Manager
Cynthia Mitchell, Executive Assistant/HR

PUBLIC:

MaryAlice Wallis, Mayor for City of Longview

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a) Chair Knapp called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY: None

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

- a) Mayor Wallis commented that the City of Longview has been working on its budget. She added that they are there to help.

4. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) Ms. Galovin provided financial reports for June 2022 for HOSWWA and Lilac Place, as provided in the Board Packet.

Chair Knapp inquired about the “bad debt expenses” mentioned in the financial report. She asked if this was due to not being able to collect debt due to COVID, due to one big thing, or due to an overall trend. Secretary Westerman responded that we would need to look into and analyze the data regarding it. Ms. Galovin



responded that she would look into it.

Chair Knapp asked if the total cash increase at Lilac Place is a substantial amount. Secretary Westerman responded that there are higher insurance costs that are coming out. The property is doing well but in the final analysis, it will probably be a lower amount of cash.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) *Commissioner Lantz made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Rudberg seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

6. STAFF REPORTS

- a) **Voucher Status:** Ms. Larson gave the Voucher Status Report as provided in the Board packet.

Mayor Wallis asked up to what age the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative works with. Ms. Larson responded that as long as youth are involved with supportive services, they will be referred up to age 24. Mayor Wallis asked how we would find out about people needing the FYI services. Ms. Larson responded that youth would be referred. Mayor Wallis added that she has been hearing that homeless youth make up a significant portion of our homeless population and that she wants to learn more about the services. Ms. Larson responded that individuals in the program will have the FYI voucher for up to 3 years—as long as they are attending supportive services—and that they will then be transitioned to a Housing Choice Voucher.

Mayor Wallis asked how people would access the Stability Vouchers. Ms. Larson responded that if we get the vouchers, Coordinated Entry will be refer people to us. Mayor Wallis added that we may get some referrals through the services provided at the homeless camp. Ms. Larson added that there are Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) that are no longer being utilized so we are engaging in outreach to people to get them reissued. Mayor Wallis asked how many EHV's we have and how many people are on the waiting list. Ms. Larson stated that we have 10 vouchers available, and 174 families on the waiting list. We have reached out to the first 30 to see if they are eligible for the program. The contact for the EHV program is Housing Navigator Rick Dasher.

Chair Knapp inquired as to if people referred through Coordinated Entry are automatically put on the waitlist to receive a voucher. Ms. Larson responded that our waitlist must be open for people to be able to apply for any of our vouchers. The waitlist is currently closed, and we expect it to take over 2 years to go through it. We are going into our second year of having the EHV's, but do not know what HUD will be doing in the future with them. We have had an increased



number of seniors calling to inquire about our services and we have advised they contact Coordinated Entry.

- b) **Property Summaries:** Ms. Bonus gave an update on the Property Reports as provided in the Board Packet.

She reported that the Cowlitz County vacancy rate is at 4.5%. HOSWWA only has a 1% vacancy rate and so Ms. Bonus wanted to give congratulations to our property managers for keeping our units occupied.

- c) **VIP Summaries:** Ms. Sanders gave an update on the Veteran Integration Program (VIP) as provided in the Board Packet.

Secretary Westerman reported that the grants from the Ed and Dollie Lynch Fund and from the Rose Foundation were both received with the coordination of the Community Foundation of Southwest Washington. They were hugely instrumental in us receiving all of these grants.

Commissioner Rudberg inquired as to the open house for the new VIP housing. Ms. Sanders responded that when we close on the house, we will schedule an open house and invite people to see the new property. Commissioner Rudberg asked if we have media connections to get information on the open house out. Secretary Westerman responded that we will have a press release and that we will be releasing an ad through Bi-Coastal Media. Ms. Sanders responded that we would look into other radio stations as well. Mayor Wallis asked how many people the house will hold. Ms. Sanders responded that it will house 4 veterans or veterans with a family. Mayor Wallis asked if we currently have any vacant beds. Ms. Sanders responded that we have a waiting list with 17 people, and that beds only stay open for about 2 days in order for staff to turnover the apartment. Mayor Wallis asked how we will be filling the beds in the new house. Ms. Sanders responded that they will be filled from the waiting list and that we expect the beds to fill as soon as possible. Secretary Westerman added if Mayor Wallis has anyone to refer to our programs, that they should be referred over so that we can get them on the waiting list. We will have TBRA money available for veterans as well. Ms. Sanders continued that we have fairly constant turnover for veteran beds. Commissioner Lantz inquired as to how veterans get to VIP. Ms. Sanders responded that they can be referred to VIP via Coordinated Entry, via the VA, or they may show up via word of mouth as well. VIP will take people in any way they get to us.

7. CHAIR AND SECRETARY REPORTS

- a) **Chair Report:** None.



- b) **Secretary Report:** Secretary Westerman gave her report as included in the Board packet.

Secretary Westerman showed the finished 2021 Annual Report to the board. This year's theme showcases the work done by VIP including some wonderful success stories. Next year's theme will be focused on HOSWWA's work with homelessness.

Secretary Westerman reported on the Ocean Beach preliminary sketch done by Vancouver Housing Authority. The sketches include both parcels, labeled Phase 1 and Phase 2. Phase 1 was obtained second, so we would need permission from WSHFC to develop it first.

Phase 1 is intended to be a homeownership project. There have been issues with lenders' abilities to underwrite deals for homeownership projects, so we are working with Columbia Bank to find the problem with the underwriting software in order to get this built. There are 11 duplexes for a total of 22 units planned.

Phase 2 is currently estimated to have about 74 units, many of which are 1 bedroom. The target population is not yet determined. There is a need for senior housing, but the location may not be ideal due to lack of bus services.

Commissioner Rudberg inquired if the Longview buses go out near this property. Secretary Westerman responded that they do, however it is infrequent and limited. Chair Knapp asked if the Phase 2 apartments would have vouchers. Secretary Westerman responded that there would be a percentage that would have vouchers. In general, you can't have a property be 100% vouchers without having services for everyone. We are currently aiming at about 50% vouchers.

Chair Knapp commented that if there are no elevators at these properties, that they could be difficult for seniors living there. She asked if it was possible to have the properties be for mixed use. Secretary Westerman responded that it would be possible. At this time, we need a plan for WSHFC so that we get an extension on the LAP loans. Phase 2 would also require us attempting to obtain back-to-back 9% funding, which is not normally granted to smaller agencies. Secretary Westerman added that if we were to gear this property towards seniors, we would need to redraw the plan. Elevator installation and inspection can be costly. Ms. Bonus added that there are a lot of people looking for 1 bedroom units on the waiting list, not just seniors.

Mayor Wallis commented that the Longview City Council is very excited about this project and is thankful that we are continuing to seek solutions to make this project work. Secretary Westerman responded that we will continue working on the Ocean Beach project.



8. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) Board Action: Resolution 23-01, Changes to Administrative Plan

Secretary Westerman reported on Resolution 23-01 as presented in the board packet. The changes add policy for the Foster Youth Initiative Voucher Program.

*Commissioner Rudberg made a motion to approve Resolution 23-01.
Commissioner Lantz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

- b) Board Action: Resolution 23-02, Adoption of Voucher Payment Standards

Ms. Larson reported on Resolution 23-02 as presented in the board packet. Secretary Westerman added that we have gone over the 120% rates with HUD and that the analytics show that we are projected to have plenty of money to get through the year at this level. Furthermore, this could help us grow our HUD funds.

Commissioner Lantz made a motion to approve Resolution 23-02. Commissioner Rudberg seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

- c) Board Action: Resolution 23-03, Execution of an MOU with DCYF

Commissioner Lantz made a motion to approve Resolution 23-03. Commissioner Rudberg seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

- d) Board Action: Resolution 23-04, Budget Revision

Secretary Westerman reported on Resolution 23-04 as presented in the board packet. Social Security released their Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) at 8.7%. The revision to the budget allows for a 2% further increase of the COLA for staff, bringing the total to a 9% COLA.

*Commissioner Rudberg made a motion to approve Resolution 23-04.
Commissioner Lantz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

- e) Board Action: Motion to approve changes to HR Policy—Leave Policies

Secretary Westerman reported on the changes to the HR Policy as presented in the board packet. These changes correct the annual leave charts and add an administrative leave policy.

*Commissioner Lantz made a motion to approve changes to the HR Policy.
Commissioner Rudberg seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*



- f) Board Action: Motion to approve acceptance of grants for VIP house

Secretary Westerman reported on motion to accept the grants for the VIP house. These grants are \$25,000 from the Firstenberg Foundation, \$25,000 from the Ed and Dollie Lynch Fund, and \$5,000 from the Rose Foundation.

Commissioner Rudberg made a motion to approve acceptance of grants for the VIP house. Commissioner Lantz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

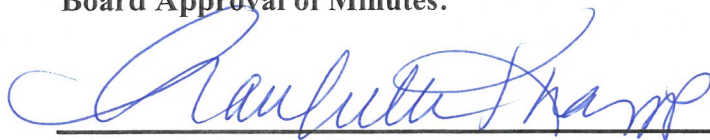
9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION, IF ANY: None

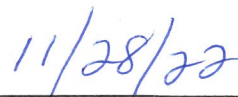
11. ADJOURNMENT:

- a) Commissioner Rudberg inquired if we would be having a holiday party. Secretary Westerman responded that she hadn't thought about it yet, and that management would discuss. Commissioner Rudberg offered to lead the holiday party committee.
- b) Chair Knapp stated that the next regular meeting will be Monday, November 28, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
- c) Chair Knapp adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Board Approval of Minutes:



Marchelle Knapp, Chairperson



Date



Attest: Jennifer Westerman, Secretary



Date

